

1ST APRIL 1955

Listeners to our New PanHellenic Voice will allow me to say a few words on this occasion, in English.

Briefly, after 307 years of Ottoman rule, Cyprus was ceded to Britain by the Turks in 1878, in return for a British promise to protect Turkey, against any move by Tzarist Russia, involving the borders of the Ottoman Empire.

The Hellenic history and background of Cyprus, could not be questioned by anyone.

In 1923, under the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey relinquished every claim over Cyprus and recognised its annexation to Britain, which had already been proclaimed by the British Government in 1914.

In 1925 Britain declared Cyprus a Crown Colony.

Hopes for 'Ennosis' were always the wish of the majority of the Cypriot Hellenes and this move rose to new heights during the First and Second World Wars, in which Greece fought on Britain's side and during which thousands of Cypriot Hellenes served in the British armed forces.

Cyprus' strategic importance however, made Britain determined to keep Cyprus and in this, they were supported by the Island's Turkish minority. The Hellenes' resentment of Britain's refusal to grant 'Ennosis', expressed itself in furious riots in 1931, during which the Government House was burnt down and this feeling of resentment continued until the 1 April 1955, when a major guerrilla onslaught commenced, led by Archbishop Makarios and General Digenis, against the British, calling for 'Ennosis' with Greece.

Needless to say, the British could not contain or suppress this patriotic upheaval by the Hellenes in Cyprus, which culminated in the Independence of Cyprus being achieved in 1960, after agreements in Zurich and London provided Cyprus with a Constitution which proved totally inoperative. The consequences of what has happened to Cyprus as a result of a Constitution being forced by the British on the Cypriot peoples, is known to all and instead of paving the way for a peaceful Nation to be formed, it created even greater division between the Turkish minority numbering, according to official British statistics 18%, and the Cypriot Hellenic majority.

At all times, the majority Cypriot Hellenes of over 80%, were ignored and no rightful power was accorded to them in their own land, by the British. Bear in mind, that at all times, the Great Powers at that time were continuously advocating that Majority Rule was the correct political system, yet in our own Cyprus, the Cypriot Hellenes did not fit into this picture, due to the selfish outlook and ulterior motives of the Great Powers.

The achievement of Independence by Cyprus, left its mark.

We were shocked at the ruthless and unnecessary execution of some of our young Heroes, by the British, which merrily caused the Hellenic Flame of Independence to rise to new heights.

Unfortunately, although the uprising which we are commemorating to-day, brought about the Independence of Cyprus in 1960, the inconsiderate actions of the Greater Powers, did not plan a peaceful solution to the Cyprus question. Moreover, one would say that it was the beginning of an era of ruthless political bombardment of the Cypriot peoples, which has culminated in the terrible crises faced today.

The spirit that was rekindled on 1 April 1955, lives on and will be the cause of ultimately absolving and freeing Cyprus from all the influences not wanted by the Cypriot Hellenes.

The spirit and agreement to give the Cypriot Hellenes their rightful place commemorated today, 1 April, will continue - Hellenism will not rest until the wishes of our heroes are met.

We wish our Cypriot people and Hellenic Cypriot Government strength and God's Richest Blessings.

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